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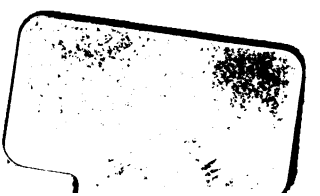

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THE MONTHS.

A Rural Poem

by

William Barre.

1813.

Bl. Dr. Cl. f.
2396

The Months;

A RURAL POEM;

AND OTHER PIECES:

WITH

Illustrative Notes.

By WILLIAM BARRE,

Author of "Poems, sacred and serious."

London:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR;

AND SOLD BY HIM, AT NO. 15, NEW HAGGERSTON.
(NEAR KINGSLAND.)

1813.

Price Eighteen-pence.

Printed by T. Rutt, Shacklewell.

ADVERTISEMENT.

In composing the following little work, the attention was particularly directed towards the rising race; and for them (more especially) the Notes are subjoined; that, in leading the mind from "nature, up to nature's God," the path might be rendered as engaging and instructive as the writer's abilities would permit.

W. B. has again to express his obligations to a long, and respectable list of Subscribers, whose names are printed from motives of the highest consideration.

Those friends, who may not find themselves included in the annexed catalogue, are requested to attribute the omission to no other cause, than the too late arrival of their favors. Should both the books pass through a future edition (which is not altogether improbable) every such name shall be correctly inserted.

New Haggerston,
April 5th, 1813.

THE MONTHS:

A RURAL POEM.

JANUARY.*

Now, by th' effects of one night's frost,
The *lake* that danc'd at *Zephyrus'*† softest kiss,
All sensibility has lost,
And scornfully rejects the proffer'd bliss.

* The word January, is derived from the Latin *Januarius;* a name given to this month by the Romans, from Janus, a supposed *King of Etruria*, to whom they paid divine honors. He was represented with a double face, and forehead, in one and the same head, to express his wisdom, prudence, and extraordinary abilities; and from this circumstance, was considered a fit emblem of the first month on the calender; because, on the one side, January looked towards the new year, and on the other, towards the old. Civilized nations in general, have agreed to date the commencement of the year on the first of January, within a few days of the *winter solstice*, or shortest day, which always takes place on the 21st of December.

† The West wind, and mildest of all the wind deities.

The *birds* such fearful folk of late,
That the least stir would freeze up all their blood,
Grown bold by want, now congregate,
And midst the din of cities seek their food.

Wild quadrupeds look out for prey;—
Into the garden steals the hungry *hare*,
And (should the tell-tale snow betray)
Is hunted down, or taken in the snare.

Now famish'd *foxes* prowl about,
And half-starv'd *polecats* make nocturnal jaunts,
To smell defenceless *hen-roosts* out,
And seize the *poultry* in their nightly haunts.

Happy for us, the *wolf* and *bear*,
That roam the *continental wilds* around
At this sad season of the year,
Set not their fatal feet on *British ground*.

Creatures, of each *domestic name*,
Now ask protection at the *Farmer's* hand;
And their more tender *offspring** claim
Much the same care as his own *babes* demand.

---

* Early calves and lambs.

Nature now acts a generous part,
And shews herself the field's and garden's friend;
While, by an heav'n-inspir'd art,
She screens the *plants* from an untimely end.*

FEBRUARY.†

Old *winter* still plays on the stage,
Yet the days measure longer and longer;
The cold seems asham'd of its rage,
And the sun‡ waxes stronger and stronger.

* Those plants, called by Botanists, *herbaceous* (or of the herb species) which die down to the root every autumn, are safely concealed under ground; and the shrubs and trees, that are exposed to the open air, have all their soft and tender parts closely wrapped up in buds, which, by their texture, resist the effects of frost.

On the 21st of this month, the sun enters *Aquarius* (the water-bearer, with his urn) the sign of January, when rains are frequent.

† This second month in the year, was called February, either from *Februus*, a distinguished Pagan divinity; or from *Februa*, one of the names of the goddess *Juno*; both of whom presided over purifications.

‡ All are agreed, that the great luminary of day, is a *burning body*, but of what precise nature, cannot so easily be defined. Some imagine it to be a *common* fire, conti-

(That the vales may get ready to sing,
And the hills stand on tip-toe for dancing,)
The queen of the seasons (fair *spring*)
Gives a thousand broad hints she's advancing.

The *woodlark* first opens her throat,
To ease nature's soul of its sadness;
The *thrush* too is trying her note;
And grief yields the sceptre to gladness.

The *rooks* are beginning to woo,
And courtship, at large, comes in fashion!
The *moles** their arch labors renew,—
And *Pomona*† falls into a passion.

---

nually supplied with globules of combustible matter. Others suppose that it is an *elementary* fire, subsisting without any kind of nourishment whatever.

* These animals do much mischief in gardens, by loosening and devouring flower roots; but in the fields they do no other damage than rendering the surface of the ground unequal by their hillocks, which obstruct the scythe in mowing. They are said also to pierce the sides of dams and canals, and let out the water; but this can only be an accidental occurrence, attended with their own destruction.

† The fabled goddess who presided over gardens, orchards, &c.

The *plants* their long torpor forget,
And underground beds are discarding;
(A flow'r is a prodigy yet,
But,) the *snow-drop* walks out in her garden.

The *flow'r buds of Alder* forth creep;
The *hazel* its catkin forth pushes;
The *leaves* in new verdure forth peep
On *currant* and *gooseberry bushes.*

The farmer awake to all this,—
Impatient all nature to see grow,
And loath to be reckon'd remiss,
Goes to *plough*, *plant*, and *prune* like a negro.

On the 19th of this month, the sun enters *Pisces*, (the fishes) an emblem of the fishing season, which began in the Nile during the month of February.

MARCH.*

NATURE always bore the name
Of a busy bustling dame;
And her numerous family
Calls aloud for industry.

Every month (on strict review)
Shews her endless work to do:
This, requires that she full fast
Dry up all the tears of *last*.†

---

* Romulus, the founder of Rome, and first king of the Romans, who divided the year into months, reckoned this the first, and called it *Mars*, from the name of his supposed father. March was always under the special protection of *Minerva*, the goddess of wisdom, war, arts and sciences. The IDES *of March* (a term of time amongst the Romans) were ever esteemed unlucky after the assassination of Cæsar. He was bidden to beware of them, but neglected the caution, and lost his life.

† The great operations of nature during March, seem to be, to dry up the superabundant moisture of February; thereby preventing the roots and seeds from rotting in the earth, and gradually to bring forward the process of evolution in the swelling buds. *Aikin.*

*Boreas** and *Euroclydon*†
Still contend against the sun;
And this leagu'd impetuous ire
Checks the year's too forward fire.

But at *Eolus*'‡ dread nod,
Sleep o'erpow'rs each windy god:
And again bewitching spring
Onwards flits on Zephyrus' wing.

Now the *chaffinch* and the *thrush*
Sing on every leafless bush;
And the pretty *ring-doves* too
On the naked branches coo.

Rooks, collect their *matters* now,
(And no matter where or how)
Or to *make*, or *mend a nest*,
Just as suits convenience best.§

---

* The North wind.

† A tempestuous North-east wind.

‡ The fabled master of the winds, tempests, and hurricanes.

§ 'Tis highly amusing to observe the tricks and artifices of this thievish tribe, some to defend, and others to plunder the materials of their new habitations. These birds are accused of doing much injury to the farmer, by plucking up the young corn, and other springing vegeta-

*Birds,** that *Norway's* rigorous hand
Drove for shelter to our land,
Scent their northern summer near,
Chirp adieu! and disappear.

Frogs, that lov'd a torpid state,
Deep in ditch, or pond of late,
Now, from the foul bottom hop,
And sit croaking at the top.

Finny people,† full of glee,
Little natives of the sea,
Welcome spring's delightful dawn,
Swim up inland streams, and spawn.

Bees, begin to look alive,
And e'en venture from the hive;
Certain token, that the field
Does its *nectareous potions* yield.

---

bles; but some are of opinion, that this mischief is fully repaid by their diligence in devouring the grubs of various insects, which, if suffered to come to maturity, would occasion much greater damage. For this purpose, they are frequently seen following the plough, or settling in flocks on newly turned-up lands.

* Such as the redwing, fieldfare, and woodcock.

† Smelts, or sparlings, are of this number.

Crocuses of yellow dye,
And of purple, meet the eye;
Primroses their meek tints bare,
And choice *violets* scent the air.

Fruit-trees, now on every side
Set their *germ-gates* open wide;
Honeysuckles too, expand
Their fair foilage on each hand.

Day, (dear guest) that heretofore
Lent a look, but lent no more,
Now, in our admiring sight,
Pays a visit long as night.*

---

* In the latter part of this month, the *equinox* happens, when day and night are of an equal length; or rather, when the sun is an equal time above and below the horizon: for the morning and evening twilight make *apparent day* considerably longer than *night*. This is called the *vernal* equinox.

On the 20th of March the sun enters *Aries* (the ram) the sign of the season when *lambs* are produced.

APRIL *

PARTLY barren, partly bloomy,
Sometimes gay, and sometimes gloomy;
April is a strong-sketch'd plan
Of the checker'd life of man.†

Sol‡ a-smiling, buds a-breaking,
Flow'rs all fragrancy awaking,
Must afford the smell and sight
A large portion of delight.

But the sun may hide affrighted,
Flow'rs may fade, and buds get blighted,
If a cloud heav'n's face o'ercast,
And sour *Eurus*§ blow a blast.

* April has its derivation from *aperio*, which signifies to open; because in this month the earth opens her bosom for the production of vegetables.

† That mixture of *light* and *shade*, with which April generally begins, proceeds from the influence of the *equinoctial storms*, still, in some degree prevailing.

‡ The enlightener of the world, or the sun.

§ The East wind.

Yet soft show'rs the earth regaling,
And warm gleams again prevailing,
Vegetation well imbibes
Nourishment for all its tribes.

Now (that lackey to *Apollo*,—*
Summer's harbinger) the *swallow*,†
Lights again on Albion's shore,
Proof that winter's reign is o'er.

Feathery folk are all a-pairing,
Rearing nests, and loves declaring;
While with varied melody
Groves resound perpetually.

Sylvan's‡ principals (symphonious)
Nightingales, are all harmonious;
And, though warbling all day long,
Each for night reserves a song.§

---

* *Apollo* is esteemed the same as *Sol*.

† The chimney or house-swallow, known by its long forked tail, and red breast, is first seen; and as this bird lives on insects, its appearance here is a certain indication that some of this minute tribe of creatures are come abroad from their winter retreats.

‡ The genius of woods and groves.

§ The nightingale sings by day as well as by night; but

*Wrynecks** come, to raise our laughter,
And the *cuckoo* follows after;
Redstarts, whitethroats, wagtails too,
April musters for review.

Plants, their flow'ry garlands wearing,
Trees and *shrubs*, their blossoms bearing.
Pleasure to the senses give,
And the *hope of fruit* revive.

---

in the day time his voice is drowned among the number of performers; in the evening it is heard alone; and from thence arises the common opinion, that the nightingale sings only by night. *Buffon.*

* This small bird is so singular in its attitudes and plumage, and has so peculiar a note, or cry, that it may easily be distinguished by those who have once heard it.

On the 20th of this month, the suns enters *Taurus* (the bull) the hieroglyphic of the *calving season.*

MAY.*

In countries more *southern*, fam'd *Maia* unites
The *splendor of summer*, and *softness of spring*;
There, all to enliven, and wake up delights,
Distils (as she flies) in dear drops from her wing.

But in our *northern climate*, this month (for most part)
Such *chill breath* discharges as sours nature's sweets:
Full oft a bright bloom-bud is pierc'd to the heart;
Full oft a fair flow'ret an early death meets.

And yet even here, *Maia's month* (in the main)
Yields beauties sufficient to ravish each sense:
The richest *green grass* decks each mountain and plain,
And the *hedges* their *hawthorny-odours* dispense.

The *blade of the corn* (happy omen) shoots high;
The *fields* wear their *cowslip and daisy* array;
The *groves* in *fresh trappings* stand full in our eye,
And *orchards* their *apple-tree blossoms* display.

---

* This fifth division of the year was called *Maius* by Romulus, out of compliment to the senators and nobles of his city, who were styled *Majores*. But others derive it from *Maia*, the mother of Mercury, to whom sacrifices were offered on the first day of the month.

The *willow** and *poplar* (now fully attir'd)
The leaf-lending bounty of Maia confess;
The *oak* has (at length) some odd garments acquir'd,
And the *beech*, and the *ash* are beginning to dress.

The *birds* are fast hatching, and rearing their young,
With patience, and diligence worthy regard:
The *bee-hives*, oppress'd with an overgrown throng,
All, able to shift for themselves, now discard.

These *outcasts* (led on by their valiant *queen bee*,†)
Fly hither, and thither to seek a new home;
And the snug hollow trunk of an old rotten tree,
Would (if left to their choice) the new dwelling become.

But man, who converts all *perform'd* and *possess'd*
By all sorts of animals, to his own gains,
Provides them a *much more secure* place of rest,
And seizes their *store* in return for his *pains*.

---

* The leafing of the trees, always begins with those of the *aquatic* kind, such as the *poplar*, *willow*, &c.: and ends with the *oak*, *beech*, and *ash*. But these are sometimes very thin of foilage even at the close of May.

† The young bees, immediately upon their expulsion from the hive, form themselves into distinct companies, and then proceed to the election of a *leader*, who is called the *queen-bee*; and whereever she flies, the rest follow.

On the 21st of this month the sun enters *Gemini* (the twins) the emblem of May, when the *goats* frequently bring forth *twin kids*.

JUNE.*

HIGH has climb'd the sun;
Days are warm as wool;
Nights are barely cool;
Summer is begun.†

Nature is full dress'd;
Forests, uplands, dales,
Gardens, woods, and *vales,*
Have put on their best.

Sheep perceive the heat,
And their garments doff;
Each his coat throws off
At the shearer's feet.‡

* Some Etymologists suppose the word *June* had its origin from *Junius Brutus,* who rendered himself famous by expelling the *Tarquin legions* from *Rome,* and settling the government on the people. Others derive it from *Junius* (i. e. young) because this month is peculiarly adapted to juvenile recreations.

† June in this climate, is what the Greeks represented May; and is, beyond dispute, the most lovely month in the year.

‡ One of the earliest rural employments of this month is sheep-shearing; a business of much importance in various parts of the kingdom, where wool is one of the most valuable productions.

In the *may-thorn's* place,
Now the *dog-rose* blooms,—
Mingling rich perfumes,
With each modest grace.

The choice *woodbine* blows;
And full many a bee
Sips its fragrancy
Long as daylight glows.

*Corn** comes into ear;
(Pleasing sight to view)
Various *grasses* too
In full flow'r appear.

Hay-time now sets in;—
Lads and *lasses* blithe,
Seizing *fork* and *scythe*,
Harvest-work begin.

All, perception meets
Admiration claims,
And right fitly names—
JUNE the *month of sweets.*

---

* In Europe, the principal kinds of corn are wheat, rye, barley, and oats. In Asia, rice is most cultivated. In Africa, and the West Indies, maize, or Indian corn.

On the 21st of this month the sun enters the tropic of *Cancer* (the crab) which *creeps both ways*, and thereby represents the increase and decrease of the sun's declination, to and from, the summer solstice.

JULY.*

THE seventh month darts his flaming ire,†
And throws dame nature in a fever,
Aye! and the fair one must expire,
Except some pitying breeze relieve her.

The beauty of each June-born flow'r
A touch of July's breath defaces;
Yea, the whole plant in a short hour
Withers away in his embraces.

Yet the *white lily* loves to bloom
Midst July's red-hot salutation,
And (tho' but niggard of perfume)
Now yields the sight a cool sensation.

The *animals* oppress'd with heat,
For shelter to the shades are creeping;
While *insect-tribes*‡ the season greet,
And a brisk market-day are keeping.

---

* *Mark Anthony* first gave the name of *Julius* (from which the word *July* is derived) to this month, in honor of his illustrious friend *Julius Caius Cæsar*, who was born in it.

† The direct influence of the sun, indeed, is now diminishing; but the earth and air have been so thoroughly heated, that the warmth which they retain, more than compensates for the gradual diminution of the solar rays.

‡ These minute creatures are for the most part annual.

*Clouds** form, and thicken in the skies,
Till a big deluge overtakes us;
Lightning† is seen through lock'd-up eyes,
And *thunder*‡ from sound sleep awakes us.

But mark the love of heaven to man;—
July repents him, while he rages;
Lends us his west-winds for a fan,
And with moist fruits our thirst assuages.

The *Farmer strips* to carry home
What heav'n's indulgent smile has granted;
What he shall need in days to come;
And what ("in tears") he sow'd or planted.

---

being hatched in the spring, and dying at the approach of winter.

* These clouds owe their formation to the great evaporation arising from the surface of the earth and waters, in consequence of the excessive heats of this period of the year, after a long continuance of dry weather.

† Lightning is a collection of electric fire drawn from the heated air and earth, and accumulated in the clouds; which, at length, overcharged, suddenly let go their contents in the form of broad flashes or fiery darts.

‡ Thunder is the noise occasioned by the explosion, and therefore always follows the lightning; *sound* travelling slower to our ears, than *light* to our eyes. The former moves, only at the rate of 1142 *feet* in a second of time, while the latter flies almost instantaneously.

On the 23rd of this month the sun enters *Leo* (the lion) an emblem of the *raging heat* of July, which the ancients compared to the furious nature of that fierce animal.

AUGUST.*

The sun makes all nature perspire,
Yet (nature still tranquil and fair)
The reapers (unaw'd by his ire)
To the brown-yellow corn-fields repair.

The farmer with rapturous gaze,
Beholds the vast wealth of his lands,—
The care of his nights and his days,
But waiting the gatherer's hands.†

And now not an hour may be lost,‡
Both master and man must *perform*,
Lest fond expectation be cross'd
By the havoc of birds and the storm.

---

* This eighth division of the year, was dedicated to *Augustus Octavius Cæsar*, because in this month he was created consul, thrice triumphed in Rome, subdued Egypt to the Roman empire, and brought the civil wars to a termination.

† Of the several kinds of grain *rye* and *oats* are usually the first ripened; but this varies according to the time of sowing; and some of every species may be seen fit for cutting at the same time.

‡ Nor need an *hour be lost*; for (thanks to the "Lord of the Harvest") the *Moon* about this time, rises sooner after sun-setting, and with less difference between the

How sweet to escape from the town,
Where smokes, stirs, and stenches annoy!
To *Ceres'** dear dwelling go down,
And her open-field scenery enjoy!

How sweet for one glance to unfold
All the corn-fields at play with the breeze!
And sweet for the eyes to behold
All the rustics as busy as bees!

But grateful indeed such a sight,
When (urg'd by munificence' call)
True gratitude, mix'd with delight,
Ascends to the AUTHOR OF ALL.

---

times of two successive risings than in any other *full moon week* in the year. By these means, she affords an almost immediate supply of light after sun-set, which is very beneficial for gathering in the fruits of the earth; hence, this full moon is distinguished from all others in the year, by the appellation of the *harvest moon*.—The *reason of which*, may be seen in several astronomical treatises.

* The goddess of agriculture. She was represented by the poets, as crowned with a turban composed of ears of corn, and bearing in a basket some of the various fruits of the earth.

On the 23rd of this month, the sun enters *Virgo* (the virgin) with a *spike of corn in her hand;* significant of August, when the *harvest* of the earth is ripe.

SEPTEMBER.*

Now, the *ninth month* with modest mein,
And wrapp'd in azure skies,—
September, soft and all serene,
Breaks coolly on our eyes.

Earth by the *sun* is well regal'd,
And *noon* is sweltry still;
But *day* is sensibly *curtail'd*,
And *morn* and *eve* are *chill*.†

The *fieldsmen* (done with *harvest toil*)
Now to *new drudgery* go;—
Since, *this month* must prepare the soil,
For seed, the *next* must sow.

---

* The word September, is from *septem ab imbre*, the seventh month from the snows. These names are abridgments from the calender of *Romulus*, which contained only ten months. But as the year is now reckoned, September is the ninth month from its commencement.

† This variation of temperature, is considered as one cause why autumn is an unhealthy time, in the warmer climates, and in moist situations.

Swallow, and *various birds* beside,
Pamper'd on *insects* here,
(Now those *delicious morsels* hide)
Take wing, and disappear:

While others of the feathery kind*
Back to our climate come;
And in our woods, and hedges, find
A moderate wintry home.

The stately *apple-tree* bends low
Beneath its ponderous load;
And *pies*, and *cyder*† soon shall show
The fruit or bad, or good.

---

* The *fieldfare*, and *redwing* whose departure was mentioned in March, are amongst the number that return about the end of September. These birds feed chiefly on the berries with which our woods and hedges are plentifully stored all the winter.

† Cyder making, which in some counties of England is a busy and important employment, begins in September. For this purpose, the apples are taken, either fresh from the tree, or after they have lain a while to mellow, and crushed in a mill, and then pressed till all their juice is extracted. This is set to ferment, whence it becomes cyder, or (as it may properly be called) *apple wine*.

On the 23rd of this month, the sun enters *Libra* (the balance) an intimation, that the days and nights at the *autumnal equinox*, (which happens about this time) are again equal.

OCTOBER.*

Plants having pass'd the three progressive ages,—
Gone through their *springing*, *flow'ring*, *seeding* stages,
And brought, at length, to due maturity
The *embrios* of a future progeny,
Now leave those rudiments with fostering earth,
To be rais'd up at nature's grand new birth.†
Seeds are now scatter'd all about the land,
By various means, and with a liberal hand:
Some, mount the nimble pinions of the wind,
And to a far-off county are consign'd:
Others, to coats of animals adhere,
And thus obtain dispersion every where:‡

* This month derives its name from the same source as the preceding: and signifies the eighth from the snows, or from winter. *Domitian*, the last of the Cæsars, who was born in this month, was desirous of having it called after his own name, but this proud project, perished with him, for it still retains the same name and situation as in the Roman calender of *Numa Pompilius*.

† This process being completed, the parent vegetable (if of the *herb kind*) either totally dies, or perishes as far as it rose above ground. If a *tree*, or a *shrub*, it loses all its tender parts which the spring and summer had put forth.

‡ Many seeds too, are contained in *berries*, which being

Such care He shews, who manages creation,
For the well-being of fair vegetation.
Now *she* who *hangs her nest* at the *house-eves*,*
Twitters—"farewell," and our chill climate leaves;
While her *first cousin*† makes a whole year's stay,
And in some close chink sleeps the cold away.

The *grape* (not the least luscious fruit, tho' last)
October tenders to the touch and taste;‡
The *Vintager* relieves the *burthen'd vine*,
And *European cups* o'erflow with *wine*.

The *Husbandman* now sows his *winter-grain*,
Nor slacks his hand for wind or moderate rain;
But should the clouds too great a moisture yield,
He takes his *plough* and works the *stubble-field*.

Britons, this month, their boasted *acorns* sow,
And *thundering navies* straight begin to grow.

---

eaten by birds, are discharged again uninjured, and grow where they happen to light.

* The common martin.

† The sand martin. This bird breeds in holes in the sandy banks of rivers, or about cliffs and quarries; and is supposed to pass the winter in a torpid state in those places.

‡ In most of the wine countries of Europe, the *vintage* takes places in October. The grapes when gathered, are immediately pressed, and the juice is fermented like that of apples in making cyder. A great variety of wines are produced from the different kinds of grapes, and the diversity of climates in which they grow. In England, this

A few *faint flow'rets* still amuse the eyes,
But each its *wonted fragrancy* denies,
For *winter* 'gins to breathe, and all that's grateful dies.

NOVEMBER.*

November, rob'd in gloom and grief,
Draws tears and sighs from all;
The *last month* sadly *chang'd* the leaf,
And *this* completes its *fall*.†

Verdure all wither'd, warmth all gone,
Days dwindl'd to a span,
Winds all at war, and *floods come on,*
Afflict both beast and man.

---

fruit does not ripen constantly enough to be worth cultivation for the purpose of making wine.

On the 23rd of this month, the sun enters *Scorpio* (the scorpion) a noxious animal placed as the hieroglyphic of October, because at this season, diseases of various kinds too often rage.

* November is from *novem ab imbre*, the ninth month from winter, or the snows.

† There is something extremely melancholy in this gradual process, by which the trees are stripped of all their beauty, and left monuments of decay and desolation.

Yet now and then the weather clears,—
Heav'n dyes its mantle blue,
The *fumy foul fog* disappears,
And the *sun smiles anew.*

But *clouds* again o'erspread the skies,
Again 'tis all distress;
Each *tree* perceives the storm arise,
And *yields to nakedness.**

Stock-doves to Britain's bosom flee,
Soon as November dawns:
The *salmon*† leaves her native sea,
Swims up our streams, and spawns.

The *Farmer* now makes haste to close
His toils on fallow ground;
That he may give his *plough* repose,
Till the next year comes round.

Cattle, and *horses* (pinch'd by want)
Ask for the *treasured store*,
Since the *poor pasture* cannot grant
Its delicacies more.

---

* High winds frequently happen in November, which at once strip the trees of their faded leaves, and exhibit them entirely destitute of covering.

† The force and agility of these fish, in leaping over cataracts, and other obstacles to their ascent, are truly sur-

Sheep in the *turnip-field* must feed,
Or to the *hay-rick* come;
Bees must be safe from *cold* and *need*,
And *pigeons kept at home*.

DECEMBER.*

EACH change that this comfortless period displays,
Is no more than a step tow'rds complete desolation;
The sun still receding, still shortens the days,
And leaves us to frost, fogs, and long lamentation.

The *quadrupeds*, fast in their private retreats,
Or slumber, or sleep from December's first dawning,
Or revel at ease on their hearded-up meats,
Nor dare to look out till the spring cries—"good morning."

prising. They are frequently taken in this attempt, by nets or baskets placed directly below the fall, into which they are carried after an unsuccessful leap.

On the 22nd of this month, the sun enters *Sagittarius* (the archer) marking November as the usual season for *hunting*.

* The word December is an abridgement of *decem ab imbre*, the tenth month from the snows. Before *Romulus*,

The *bat** (cheerless creature!) feels winter come on,
And into his weather-proof crevice is creeping;
Where (though food be withheld till the winter is gone)
He hangs by his heels, and ne'er starves whiles he's sleeping.

The *dormouse* is seiz'd with his old sleepy fit;—
He felt it a-coming, and laid up provision,
That the first pleasant day, he may wake,—take a bit,—
And resume the repose of his former condition.

The *badger*, the *hedgehog*, and mischievous *mole*,
Are all fast asleep in their favourite recesses:
The *squirrel*,† secure in his warm little hole,
With sunshiny earnings each grievance redresses.

---

the year was reckoned by the *time* of the snows, and according to his calender, *after* the snows.

* This animal retires early to some cave or hole, where it remains the whole winter, suspended by the hind feet, and closely wrapped up in the membranes of the fore feet. *Buffon.*

† Squirrels, and various kinds of field mice, provide magazines of food against winter, but are not known to become torpid. *Aikin.*

How hard is the lot of that animal, now,
Who amidst summer comforts, forgat winter crosses;
When poor wretched nature has nought to bestow,
Save a few *leathern worts*,* and some scraps of *dry mosses*.

But *spring*, *summer*, *autumn*, and *winter* fly fast;
The months are all play'd, and the curtain is dropping:
Let's praise their dread MOVER for those that are *past*,
And for the *next twelve* in his mercy be hoping.

---

* These worts, or *lichins* and some different tribes of mosses, are the only vegetables which now flourish. Lichens cover the ditch-banks, and other neglected spots, with a leather-like substance, which in some countries serves as food both to men and cattle.

On the 21st of December happens the shortest day; when the sun is little more than eight hours above the horizon in these islands. A few degrees to the northward of which the sun does not rise at all, and a continued night lasts weeks, or months, according to the distance from the north pole. But on the contrary, to the countries near the south pole it is at this period perpetual day, and every where to the south of the equator it is summer. As our summer advances, their winter approaches.

At this time, the sun enters the tropic of *Capricorn* (the goat) who by its climbing up the rocks, is placed as the sign of December, when that luminary, at the winter solstice, begins to ascend again towards the equinoctial.

HOPE.

(AN IMITATION.)

Midst anxious cares, and boding fears,
That make life's tide run wild with sorrow,
Hope fondly whispers in my ears,—
"The *storm* will all subside *to morrow*."

To morrow shews no smoother sea;—
Yet Hope, thy promises I'll cherish;
For should I madly part with thee,
The storm would *swell*, and I must *perish*.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

(A SONNET.)

No sooner autumn, winter's harbinger,
(*Alias*, his Trumpeter)
Makes annual proclamation through the land,
That nature's rude despoiler is at hand,
Than, panic-struck, the leaves begin to fall,
And shortly the poor tree is stript of all.

Thus, in adversity's distressing day,
Soon as the "sap of maintenance" is gone,
Our once fond friends like smoke dissolve away,
Or melt like snow before the potent sun.

Bless'd is the man who finds a *friend in need;*
(And Britain can produce ye many)
But *he* must be right blest indeed,
Who does not greatly *need* the *help* of *any.*

ADDRESS TO THE LAPLANDER.

Ah Laplander! child of the arctic pole!
Who (resident on the bright side of nature;
While busy thoughts o'er thy condition roll)
But pities thee, and praises his Creator?

Fast in th' embrace of everlasting snows;
Where winter reigns almost without cessation;
Where yon fair sun a feeble smile bestows,
And leaves the rest to night's foul usurpation.

Lodg'd in a tent compos'd of rein-deer skin,*
Round which the north-wind roars an endless ditty,
And howling wolves maintain a ceaseless din;—
Who can refuse the man of Lapland pity?

And yet, the man of Lapland tastes his sweets:—
Nurs'd in a hardy lap, and full of vigor,
He smiles down every obstacle he meets,
And sings away his winter's wildest rigor.

Though indigent; and inconveniences
Are dealt out to him by no stinted measure;
He's rich, in knowing no necessities,
Save such as he can satisfy at pleasure.

What though his *dawns* but sparing visits pay,
And *light's grand source* he seldom sets his eyes on,
To make him some amends for absent day,
The *moon* and *streamers*† light up his horizon.

---

* To the rein-deer, the Laplander is principally indebted for subsistence; and for the supply of almost all his wants. Its flesh is his food, and its milk is his drink. Its skin furnishes him with his house, his bed, and his dress: and wrapped up in this, he defies the severity of his native climate; and in the midst of snows, drives his herds along the desert, fearless and at his ease.

† The *aurora borealis;* peculiarly luminous, in countries bordering on the northern pole. This phenomenon is

Let his bleak hogs with *moss** be cover'd o'er,
To feast his *deer*, and fit them for their labors;
He seeks nor eastern ease, nor southern store,
Nor courts the luxuries of his western neighbours.

THE BLIND.

Be glad my soul! for the hag of night
Has her merciless rule resign'd;
Be grateful too! for the maid of light,
Unveils her charms to bewitch *thy* sight,
But not to enchant the *blind*.

The morn may waken, the sun arise,
And *he* no enjoyments find;
Then let me singular favors prize,
Extol the Being who gave me eyes,
And pity the hapless *blind*.

supposed to be the result of certain nitrous and sulphurous vapours, thinly spread through the atmosphere above the clouds, where they ferment, and taking fire, the explosion of one portion kindles the next, and the flashes succeed one another, till all the vapour is set on fire.

* The food on which the rein-deer lives.

He claims some pity; but more, much more,
The man of benighted mind;
One, wails his wretchedness o'er and o'er,
The *other*, his wretchedness can't deplore,
Not knowing (alas!) he's *blind*.

Ye *now* "made light," but whose sight of late
Sin's horrible films confin'd,
Can you forget your so sad estate?
Divine compassion so strangely great,
That open'd your eyes when *blind*?

You answer, "Never! while life remains,
"Heav'n's mercy we'll call to mind;
"We'll sing to sinners in sweetest strains,
"Our God still lives, and his *grace* still reigns,
"Nor ever forget the *blind*."

All hail benevolence' sacred bands!*
In love to all people join'd?
May power Almighty uphold the hands,
That hold out *life* to expiring lands,
And *light* to the *heathen*, *blind*.

* The Missionary societies.

Go on (ye friends of the friendless) still,
The *shadows* begin to flee;
Go on, and finish your sov'reign's will,
Nor cease till *light* his whole empire fill,
And all his blind subjects *see*.

BORROWED BEAMS.

The mild *moon's* lovely light
Makes gloom itself look gay;
Pours on our sight
Midst sullen night,
An imitative day.

Yet no *inherent* worth
Does the pale planet own;
Each ray for earth,
Ascribes its birth
To *union* with the *sun*.

And if our envious *sphere*
Hide that resplendent face,*
No rays appear
To chase a tear;
Darkness has seized their place.

* An *eclipse* of the *moon* is occasioned by the coming of the earth between the *moon* and the sun; and it is easy

So saints, with light endow'd,
Their borrow'd lustre shed;
But if a *cloud*
HEAV'N'S SUN-BEAMS shroud,
Their *moon-beams* all are fled.

THE HAPPY MAN.

WHAT does the christian do
When clouds obscure the sky?
When perils rush to view
Where does the christian fly?
"JEHOVAH'S NAME" becomes his "tow'r,"*
In every dark and dangerous hour.

God *hath* a refuge prov'd,
And this begets a hope,
Which, were the earth remov'd,
Might serve him for a prop:
HE, *having* sav'd, and saving *still*,
It follows—certainly he *will*.

---

to be conceived, that the moon, having no light of her own, when the rays of the sun are intercepted from her, will appear dark or dusky. In like manner, an *eclipse* of the *sun*, happens when the moon comes between the sun and the earth.

* Prov. xviii. 10.

And should *experience' page*
Emit no friendly light,
His *Bible* can engage
To cheer the darkest night:
He reads, as through those fields he roves,
Heav'n ne'er "forsakes" the men he "loves."*

Let friends deal *faithlessly*,
(And such may *deeply wound*)
Or prove as *poor* as *he*,
(And *sons of want* abound)
Some *proud, profane Philistine foe*,†
In evil times, shall *kindness* shew.

Frail *human help* outright,—
Ravens must bring him *meat*;‡
Bears, in his quarrel fight;§
Fish, yield a *safe retreat*,‖
Or *cast up money* to his hand;¶
And *dogs give healing*** at command.

If creatures, *animal*,
Withhold their wonted aid;
Things without life, are all
His humble servants made:—

---

* Psalm xxxvii. 25. † 1 Sam. xxvii. 6. ‡ 1 Kings xvii. 6.
§ 2 Kings ii. 24. ‖ Jonah i. 17. ¶ Mat. xvii. 27.
** Luke xvi. 21

Seas part, to free him from the foe,*
And *fires* their *properties forego*.†

Does time *new woes* produce?
Woes, that each step attend?
And *elements* refuse
His interests to befriend?
A *burning angel camp*‡ appears,
'Twixt *him*, and all his *foes*, and *fears*.

But chiefly, thou his God,
Art near in every need:
Strength, succour, safe abode,
From the same source proceed.
"O Lord of hosts! thrice happy *he*,
"Who puts his trust alone in thee."§

THE SHADES.

The *sun* has dropt into the sea;
The *night-dews* are falling apace;
The *wearied-out world* (see!) is laid *fast asleep*,
With *sables* thrown over its face.

* Exodus xiv. 22. † Daniel iii. 27. ‡ 2 Kings vi. 17.
§ Psalm lxxxiv. 12.

Obscurity curtains the skies;
The *flow'rs* have all lock'd up their leaves;
And (save where the poor widow'd *wood-pigeon sighs*)
The ear not a *murmur* perceives.

Bees, tir'd with the toils of the day,
In their snug waxen chambers abide;
The frisky young *lambkin*, as jaded with play,
Lies close by its dam's fleecy side.

The *din* of the *farm-yard* has ceas'd;
The *hammer*, and *saw* are at rest;
The *child* with his *rattle* no longer is pleas'd,
For he sleeps on his mother's soft breast.

The *tongue of the multitude fails*;
The *laborer* is *stretch'd on his bed*;
The deepest-dy'd darkness o'er all things prevails,*
While *nature* is *hush'd* as the *dead*.

* What a motive for gratitude, that we are not hurried at once, from the splendor of broad day, into total darkness! which would be the case, if we had no *atmosphere*. But by means of the surrounding air, we enjoy the sun's light, reflected from the aërial particles, for some time before he rises, and after he sets. For when the sun has descended below the horizon, and consequently is out of our sight, the atmosphere, being higher than we are, has his light still imparted to it, and reflects it to us. This light,

Be these moments devoted to thought,
Sedate as the *season of night*;
Let *death* to my frail recollection be brought,—
Its *shadows* stand full in my sight.

But a few fleeting *sand-grains* have run,
Since *earth* look'd *completely alive*;—
Since, no traces appear'd of a *sad-setting sun*;—
And *life's close* will as surely arrive.

LINES

WRITTEN ON THE DEATH OF A FIRST,

AND

ONLY CHILD.

HENCE rebel-thoughts! 'twas heav'n's command;
So I must kiss the cutting rod;
Believe, 'twas in a FATHER'S hand;
Be sure, HE *is*, and *will be* God.

---

or rather twilight, gradually decreases, till the sun has got 18° below the horizon; and then all that part of the atmosphere, which is above us, is darkened.

True! I lie bleeding in the dust,
Of *half life's silken joys bereft;*
Yet, let me write th' Almighty just,
And praise him for the *half that's left.*

My feet shall enter *wisdom's school;**
My eyes survey each suff'ring saint;
That my dull heart may *learn the rule*
To ease itself of each complaint.

I'll look at *Job;* all *sores,* and *akes,*
And *bare* as into life he came;—
Be taught,—"'tis God who gives, and takes,"†
And try if I can—"bless his name."

I'll send back murmurings whence they came,
With *Eli's* sentence;‡ "'tis the Lord!"
I'll view the *King of Israel,* "dumb,"§
And smother the first traiterous word.

I'll to the *garden*‖ speed my way,
And gaze upon the *sorrowing* Son;
For, with that *sufferer* I would say,—
Not *my will,* Lord, but *thine* be done.¶

---

* The holy Scriptures. † Job i. 21. ‡ 1 Sam. iii. 18.
§ Psalm xxxix. 9. ‖ Gethsemane. ¶ Luke xxii. 42.

ON TIME.

Full oft we talk of *precious Time!*
But who amongst us knows its *worth?*
What say the group in *rosy prime,*—
The croud to life just stepping forth?
Can these our *question solve?* ah no!
They bid us *further onward* go.

Do "*filthy talkers?*" "*jesters vain?*"
Th' *adulterer* with his guilty *mate?*
Or, the *long sabbath-breaking train,*
Time's value rightly calculate?
Their words and actions answer—"no!"
Therefore, we must still onward go.

The *swearer? drunkard? epicure?*
Or *he** (on *honor* so intent)
Who rather than a *sneer* endure,
Will *send,* or else to hell be *sent?*
Have these *Time's worth* discover'd? no!
And hence, we further onward go.

* The Dueller.

But to what *quarter* shall we turn,
Where *Time* is *noted* as *he flies*?
Or, from what *being* may we learn
This *Diamond's impartial price*?
On yonder *death-bed* let's bestow
A look, before we further go.

Listen! "O for an *hour's reprieve*,
"Ere an *avenging Judge appear*,
"And *my lost soul her doom receive:*
"But (fruitless prayer!) heav'n cannot hear!
"*Each slighted hour* (with me) *is o'er!*
"And *Death* is *beating at the door!*

"O *murder'd points of Time!* that seem'd
"Mere *grains of sand* as down ye roll'd;
"But now (alas! too late) esteem'd
"*Invaluable grains of gold!*
"Because ye basely were *abus'd*,
"Now are ye righteously *refus'd!*

"Unhappy wretch! I faint! I die!"
Here, then, our tedious search has end:
Here, *Time's due moment* we descry:
To this *example* let's attend;
And seek t' improve the PRESENT NOW,
For *gone*, 'tis gone *for ever* too.

For you, the poor vow you made,
And seek t' improve the PRIZE you gain,
To this example lift the mind;
Those, whom you copy, we design;
Those Virtues, which you now possess,
Here, in their fairest forms, we place.

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